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FOREWORD

This is the 55th annual report on Dairy Industry Statistics issued in cooperation with the Dairy Marketing and Milk Pooling Branches of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. It contains, for the year 1998, a summary of statistical data that was originally published monthly in the "Dairy Information Bulletin" (DIB). Comparative figures for earlier years, and selected special reports relating to the dairy industry, are also presented. All changes from previously published data represent either corrections of errors or revisions based on receipt of more complete information.

Data pertaining to the United States and to states other than California were secured from selected reports of the United States Department of Agriculture. Estimates of the population of California were obtained from various reports of the California Department of Finance.

Most of the statistical data contained in this publication is based on reports filed by individuals and firms engaged in the production, manufacture, and distribution of milk and dairy products in California. Although it is not possible to list all of these reporters individually, their cooperation is acknowledged with appreciation.

1998 California Dairy Industry At a Glance

Production

- ❖ California leads the nation in total milk production.
- ❖ California surpasses the next highest state, Wisconsin, by approximately 4.8 billion pounds and the third highest state, New York, by approximately 15.9 billion pounds.
- ❖ California produced approximately 17.5 percent of the nation's milk.
- ❖ California ranked sixth in milk production per cow with an annual average of 19,442 pounds. The U.S. average was 17,192 pounds per cow.
- ❖ Grade A milk accounted for 98.5 percent of total production.
- ❖ California's five leading counties in milk production were Tulare (22.0%), Merced (12.8%), San Bernardino (11.5%), Stanislaus (10.6%), and Riverside (8.1%). These counties accounted for 65.0 percent of California's total milk supply.

Farms

- ❖ California had 1.4 million milk cows, establishing it as the second leading state in the nation.
- ❖ There were 2,246 dairy farms in California.
- ❖ The average dairy farm in California has 624 cows.
- ❖ California dairies are among the lowest in the cost of producing milk in the nation.
- ❖ Feed cost represented approximately 50% of the total milk production costs.
- ❖ The annual average price paid to producers F.O.B. plant was \$15.02 per cwt.
- ❖ Approximately 12,700 people are employed on dairy farms, including hired and family labor.

Processing

- ❖ California ranked number 1 in the U.S. in the production of butter, nonfat dry milk, and frozen products. It ranked second in cheese and yogurt production.
- ❖ California produced 45.1 percent of the nation's nonfat dry milk and 27.3 percent of the nation's butter.
- ❖ Whole milk cheddar and whole milk mozzarella constituted about 78.3 percent of the cheese produced in California.
- ❖ Approximately 14,100 people are employed by dairy product processing firms.